

"I suppose some editors are failed writers; but so are most writers."

~T.S. Eliot

Writers & Editors:

Same Goals, Different Approaches

Writers originate and prepare written materials such as scripts, stories, and advertisements. Editors plan, coordinate, or edit materials for publication. They may also review proposals and drafts for possible publication. Generally speaking, editors look at writing from the reader's point of view; writers from writer's point of view.


Writers expand upon ideas to create books, magazine articles, trade journals, online publications and advertisements. Writers also create screenplays, song lyrics, and textbooks. The web is a new and increasingly important outlet for writers who contribute to blogs, online chats, and e-zines. It has greatly increased the number of freelancers: self-employed writers who seek out writing assignments or sell their own articles to a variety of publishers, news organizations, advertising agencies or producers.

Writers who produce non-fiction must conduct research, check facts, and express ideas clearly.

Editing is the process of reviewing and then condensing, correcting or arranging written material, images, sound, video, or film, with the objective of preparing it for final presentation. In all these media, the process of editing is the same, while the respon-

sibilities are different. For instance, print editors may write an editorial in a newspaper, review stories and propose ideas, or decide which manuscripts get published, depending on who their employer is. A magazine publisher could employ editors for sports, international news, or feature stories, all of which would be overseen by an executive editor or editor-in-chief.

A bachelor's degree is usually the minimum level of education required for writing or editing positions, with preference given to communication, journalism, or English majors. Beyond that, expertise in a subject and good writing skills can be a way to enter the fields, although more difficult. Most editors started out as writers. The most common way to advance is to start writing or editing, for any media, gain a following, and build on your reputation. Employers usually request a writing sample along with a resume. The more samples that are available and the better the quality, the better the odds are for the applicant getting a job.

In 2008 there were about 152,000 writers and authors in the United States and about 130,000 editors. Of those, 70 percent of writers and authors were self-employed and twelve percent of the editors were self-employed. 

Occupational Wages-Published June 2010
(data from May 2009) for Writers and Authors

Area Name	Hourly Inexperienced	Hourly Median	Annual Inexperienced	Annual Median	Training
Ogden-Clearfield MSA	\$15.39	\$20.21	\$32,020	\$42,040	Bachelor's degree
Provo-Orem MSA	\$13.99	\$25.62	\$29,100	\$53,300	Bachelor's degree
Salt Lake City MSA	\$14.48	\$21.09	\$30,110	\$43,860	Bachelor's degree
United States	--	\$25.91	--	\$53,900	Bachelor's degree

Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.

Occupational Wages-Published June 2010
(data from May 2009) for Editors

Area Name	Hourly Inexperienced	Hourly Median	Annual Inexperienced	Annual Median	Training
Logan MSA	\$13.40	\$16.67	\$27,870	\$34,680	Bachelor's degree
Ogden-Clearfield MSA	\$19.38	\$22.52	\$40,310	\$46,830	Bachelor's degree
Provo-Orem MSA	\$11.27	\$21.36	\$23,440	\$44,430	Bachelor's degree
Salt Lake City MSA	\$16.57	\$25.29	\$34,460	\$52,600	Bachelor's degree
United States	--	\$24.42	--	\$50,800	Bachelor's degree
Utah	\$15.30	\$23.64	\$31,830	\$49,160	Bachelor's degree

Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.



Other Sources:

Webworkerdaily.com

Jobs.utah.gov

BLS.gov